



Georgetown County Parks and Recreation

Zero Tolerance Policy

Georgetown County Parks & Recreation (GTCParks) is committed to promoting positive behavior on and off the playing field. Respect is the mutual responsibility of each participant in the organization, and it is necessary to create an environment that is both safe and enjoyable for all who participate.

GTCParks strongly supports the safe and enjoyable participation in our programs for all of our participants. This policy clearly indicates the consequences of violating our Code of Conduct. Inappropriate behavior and abuse of any kind (verbal or physical) will not be tolerated.

Inappropriate behavior from coaches, players, parents, legal guardians, and spectators includes, but is not limited to offensive or insulting language; sexist or racist remarks; acts of violence; and/or vandalism.

Furthermore, for the purpose of this policy:

A “*Spectator*” is defined as anyone associated with a program participant (including immediate family members) or anyone present during a GTCParks program.

“*Belligerent Behavior*” is behavior perceived to be aggressive, hostile, and/or eager to fight.

“*Unsportsmanlike Conduct*,” also called unsporting behavior or conduct, is a foul or offense in many sports which violates the sport’s generally accepted rules of sportsmanship.

Sportsmanship - no one, including coaches, players, parents, and spectators, shall verbally confront or argue with an official, coach, player, or other fans before, during, or after the game.

Penalty for Youth

- 1st Offense - Belligerent behavior, verbal warning; general unsportsmanlike conduct, one week suspension; profanity (excessive), one week suspension
- 2nd Offense - Belligerent behavior, one week suspension; general unsportsmanlike conduct, two-week suspension; profanity (excessive), two-week suspension

Penalty for Adults

- 1st Offense – Two-week suspension from all facilities and activities including practices and games.
- 2nd Offense - Offending adult and their children will be suspended from all facilities and activities including practices and games for the remainder of the season.

Violence - Any adult who threatens or physically assaults an official, coach, staff member, volunteer, spectator, or program participant will be banned from all GTCParks programs and facilities for a minimum of two (2) years from the date of the event, and youth will be removed from all GTCParks programs for one (1) calendar year.

Note: The term “physical assault” includes but is not limited to: hitting, slapping, pushing, spitting, kicking, or striking in any way any part of the body or physical implement.

Possession - Anyone discovered to be in possession of a weapon or controlled substance is subject to criminal prosecution. Also:

- Drinking or possession of alcohol will result in suspension from the remainder of the season.
- Unauthorized possession of a weapon in program vicinity will result in a permanent suspension from GTC Parks programs and facilities.

Reporting of Abusive Behavior

By Game Officials or Referees

When a person or persons, including but not limited to game officials, coaches, players, or referees, feels they are being abused by a spectator, the game official or referee will be allowed to suspend the game. In all cases, the game official must inform the coaches from both teams that the game has been suspended. If the situation cannot be resolved, the game will be abandoned.

If a spectator's behavior results in the game official or referee suspending play, the appropriate coach MUST provide the game official with the name of the spectator that is identified as the aggressor, and the coach must advise that individual that the next occurrence will result in an abandonment of the game. If the individual is not associated with either team, then the individual must be warned that the appropriate law enforcement authorities will be notified in order to resolve the situation.

When the incident has been resolved and the game continues without further incident, the game official, coach, or referee must inform GTC Parks staff that the game was temporarily suspended and provide a detailed explanation of the situation.

Non-Game Situation

In the event an incident of abuse is not recognized by a game official, or if one occurs in a non-game situation (e.g., during practice), it is the obligation of the coach or other officials to report such incident to GTC Parks staff. Details including the date, time, and location of the incident, the parties involved, description of the abusive behavior, and to whom the behavior was directed must be provided in this report.

A spectator who feels he/she may have been the subject of, or witness to, abusive behavior may submit a written complaint to GTC Parks staff. Details including the date, time, and location of the incident, the parties involved, description of the abusive behavior, and to whom the behavior was directed must be provided in this report.